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AID
and
EAST TIMOR

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL
FOR OVERSEAS AID

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AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR OVERSEAS AID

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East Timor's claim on the attention and resources of enlightened aid and development agencies is beyond dispute.

Its history has been one of unrelenting deprivation and oppression.

Portugal, its colonial overlord for centuries, failed it in every department - culturally, spiritually, economically, educationally, medically, and politically.

During the Second World War, East Timor suffered widespread destruction and death when Japan and Australia presumed to fight their war on its soil.

The Indian Summer of 1974-1975 was marred first by fratricidal civil war, then cut short violently by the Indonesian military invasion.

For the Indonesian Government this act of physical annexation has been but the first step along the long road towards integration with all that Indonesianisation will entail, carried out at great cost to its army, its economy, and its international reputation.

For the Timorese it has been the ugliest chapter so far.

It has meant continued armed resistance, terrible loss of life, and massive social, psychological, and economic dislocation of which, after nearly four years, still little is known to the outside world.

This report attempts, in a factual, analytical, and questioning way, to deal with one aspect of this total Timor story: the humanitarian situation of its people at this point in this conflict, and what has been done or not done in response to their suffering.

The report documents, from a variety of sources, a disturbing situation in present day East Timor. While acknowledging the difficulties in obtaining information and the dangers of repercussions against Indonesians and East Timorese who publically disclose information on the actual situation in East Timor (cf. Preamble on Sources, pp. 2-3), the report details the following situation:

1. LARGE DISLOCATION OF EAST TIMORESE

The past 12 months has seen the movement of over 100.000 people from the mountain areas of East Timor (pp. 4-6) to a number of Indonesian administrative areas in the territory whose total population of displaced people is officially put at 300.000 by the Indonesian administration (p.7).

The reasons for the movement of these people appear to be any one or a combination of the following:

a) People who fled from population centres to the mountains at the beginning of the Indonesian invasion and who are now returning.

b) People who normally live in the countryside but who now face large food shortages caused by a combination of factors including drought, Indonesian military operations against food crops and the continual movement of people preventing the possibility of tending crops in one area.

c) People who have been forced to go into these camps by the Indonesian military in an attempt to separate the population from FRETILIN (p.7).

2. CAMP PEOPLE IN DESPERATE SITUATION

The situation of the displaced people, as they arrive in these centres, is desperate. They show signs of advanced malnutrition. The death toll in these camps, as well as in non-camp areas of East Timor, through starvation and disease, is very high (pp.6-7). Aid on a large scale appears to be needed in East Timor.

3. A SITUATION OF WAR CONTINUES TO EXIST

Notwithstanding the number of displaced people in East Timor, the situation is far from being 'back to normal'.

Armed resistance continues, though at a much reduced rate when compared with the previous three years. There is still a considerable Indonesian military presence in East Timor and in fact, it is the military which is the real power in all levels of the administration of East Timor (p.8). People living in Indonesian-controlled areas of East Timor have a hard life, and with few exceptions, East Timorese are far from happy with the Indonesian occupation of their country.

4. AID TO EAST TIMOR - SOME MISUSE OCCURS

The Indonesian Government will not allow outside aid agencies or governments to work in East Timor.
The International Red Cross has been prevented from returning to East Timor since the beginning of the invasion (having worked in East Timor for three months prior to the invasion, p. 9).
The only way a selection of non-Indonesian aid agencies and governments have been able to help is by complying with Indonesian terms and channeling their aid into East Timor via Indonesian Red Cross (p.10-11).
While the abilities of Indonesian Red Cross as a relief organisation and problems with transportation experienced in East Timor are noted, it appears nevertheless there are serious questions about IRC operations in East Timor.
This report contains reliably-based accusations that some aid from sources such as the Australian and New Zealand Governments, channelled as it is through the Indonesian Red Cross, has in fact been sold for profit or has been misused or misdirected in other ways (pp. 11-15).

Details are also provided of the limited aid programme conducted separately from the Indonesian Government by the Timorese Catholic Church, and some information on a yet-tO-be-implemented plan by the American based Catholic Relief Services (CRS).

The material in this report raises a number of serious questions for any future consideration of the situation in East Timor.

* The report implicitly says that aid is available for the people in East Timor but much of it is not getting through. Are there any ways in which aid can be sent to East Timor such that it does get to the people who need it? Are Aid Agencies going to have to insist on directly supervising their aid programmes in East Timor?

* Does publicity of the actual situation in East Timor, with its implicit criticisms of the Indonesian administration, affect continuation of family reunions of East Timorese and/or decrease the possibility of aid organisations supervising their aid programmes in East Timor? Or is the opposite the case - that it is only through describing the real situation in East Timor that pressure can be brought to bear on the Indonesian Government to ensure that aid gets to the people in need of it.

* If, as is suggested in the report, East Timorese are in camps as part of the Indonesian military strategy in East Timor, will aid only serve to perpetuate this system of control and the people's dependence on outside supplies instead of their movement back to their villages and self-reliance?

Although not covered in this report, Aid agencies wishing to reveal the situation in East Timor today may find themselves in conflict with the Australian Government which, since the early days of the Indonesian invasion, has acted to avoid criticism of Indonesian actions in East Timor. Australian investment in Indonesia, Australian interests in seabed resources south of Timor, American and Australian financial and military aid and public support of the current Indonesian military government,

which form the basis of the "Australian-Indonesian relationship", are clear barriers to any change in attitude or actions by the Australian Government in relation to East Timor.

These are some of the many dilemmas facing aid agencies in relation to the humanitarian situation in East Timor. It is hoped that this report will provide a sound picture of the current situation in East Timor and will provide the basis for a further sharing between aid agencies concerned with the situation in East Timor and will raise for discussion, the serious and complex questions which organisations wishing to send aid to East Timor face.

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Preamble on Sources

Since the invasion of East Timor on December 7, 1975, by the armed forces of the Indonesian Government, detailed, accurate and confirmable information on developments in East Timor have been difficult to obtain.

From the time of the invasion till about September 1978, the most regular public source of information from inside East Timor were radio messages and broadcasts from FRETILIN. During that period, an increasing number of non-FRETILIN reports appeared - generally in the form of letters being smuggled out of East Timor, reports from Indonesians who had been to Timor, or from Timorese who were in Java or had managed to get to Portugal. (2) In broad terms, these non-FRETILIN accounts confirmed those of FRETILIN.

Indonesian Government statements on events in East Timor, however, combined with that Government's successful exclusion of independent observers/journalists/ aid organisations from East Timor (with a few closely controlled exceptions) have served to throw into some doubt any claims being made about the actual situation in East Timor at any time. (3) Some would argue that because of this conflicting evidence judgement must be suspended until the facts can be personally verified. It is our belief, however, that the consistency and correlation of so many different sources over a long period give them a genuine credibility.

For its part, the Indonesian Government has proved to be a most unreliable source of information on events in East Timor - the scene being set by the then Indonesian Foreign Minister Adam Malik's claim that Indonesian troops did not invade East Timor on December 7, 1975. (4)

Successive Australian Governments (both the Labor Government before the invasion and the Liberal-N.C.P. Government after the invasion) have chosen to conceal their extensive knowledge of developments in East Timor.

Today, the situation regarding information from East Timor is unchanged.

East Timor remains closed to independent observers. Letters containing details of life in Indonesian controlled areas, military events etc. still have to be carried out of Timor by 'safe hand' - and if details of these letters are made public, the identity of the writer cannot be revealed for the sake of that person's safety. Indonesians who visit East Timor and report to their friends and colleagues on the situation, generally choose to remain anonymous because of the fear or possibility of actions being taken against them or their associates. East Timorese who manage to get out of East Timor and/or Indonesia have plenty to tell but most choose to keep the information to themselves for fear of actions against their relatives still in Timor. An aid agency will be reluctant to give details of its operations and knowledge concerning East Timor because this may affect the continuation of its work.

Such is the status of much of the material in this report. A combination of the above-mentioned situations prevents diwclosure of some sources of information. We know the sources of the anonymous information in this report. We have no reason to believe that these sources would provide deliberately misleading information, and as such, we are prepared to record this information in the belief that it is as reliable as any that is available. Much as we would like to detail our sources for other people to judge, this is not

a decision we can make for those who have supplied the information.

The very existence of the information in this report raises a fundamental problem concerning aid agencies and East Timor - is this information a complete account of the situation in East Timor? No single person is in a position to know all aspects of the current situation in East Timor. This report should therefore be treated as a preliminary report attempting to piece together information on East Timor.

It can be improved by individuals and organisations contributing their own knowledge of the situation in East Timor. It is only through an assiduous and continuing process of accumulation and analysis of information that Australian Aid Agencies will be able to make honest decisions concerning humanitarian aid to the people of East Timor.

Notes

(1) The detail of FRETILIN-sourced information, the bulk of it being a record of military encounters in East Timor, has been recorded in Timor Information Service (Melbourne) and by the Campaign for an Independent East Timor (Sydney) in roneo form to the end of 1976 and in 'East Timor News' from early 1977 onwards. Except for the firstfew months of the Indonesian invasion, Australian mass-media have given only scant coverage to information from FRETILIN.

(2) The most notable detail from refugees in East Timor was recorded by Jim Dunn who, in early 1977, interviewed a number of East Timorese who had been allowed to leave East Timor in late 1976. Their revelations of Indonesian atrocities in the early part of the invasion received world-wide coverage.

(3) For examples of Indonesian-controlled visits by foreign diplomats to East Timor, see Jim Dunn's Notes on the Current Situation in East Timor, Legislative Research Service, Canberra, 6 April 1979, pp 6-7.

(4) For critiques of Indonesian Government accounts of developments in East Timor since the invasion, see Timor Information Service, nos. 24, 26, 27.

Section One: The Situation

1. THE SITUATION IN THE LAST HALF OF 1978

Reports on the humanitarian situation in East Timor during the latter months of 1978 are mainly concerned with one problem: the emergence of tens of thousands of people from the mountains and bush in search of food and medicine.

The reports come from three different sources and cover the period August - October 1978.

i) Church sources reported that up to August 1978, an estimated 50.000 people had come down from the mountains to the lowlands and coast. It was predicted a further 60.000 - 80.000 would come before the end of 1978, bringing the total to 110.000 - 130.000.

These people were described as destitute, in extremely poor physical condition, and in need of emergency assistance in the form of food, medicines and clothes.

ii) A delegation of eleven foreign Ambassadors and some journalists visited East Timor, September 6-7, 1978, and were escorted by the Indonesian Foreign Minister, Dr Mochtar Kusumaatmaja, to Dili, Baucau, Maliana and Remexio. (1)

They were told that up to 125.000 people had come down from the mountains and 20 - 30.000 of these were in appalling condition including cholera, malaria, tuberculosis, and advanced malnutrition. (2)

Four Ambassadors (from Australia, Canada, USA and Japan) called for the urgent implementation of an international relief operation. Mr Glen Shortcliff, the Canadian Ambassador, spoke of "a desperate situation... they are starving in many cases; they are desperately ill; they need help in terms of immediate relief - food, clothing, basic medical care". (3)
Another report stated that in one camp alone, 500 Timorese were dying each month. (4)

iii) In October 1978, World Vision Indonesia visited East Timor and reported that 70.000 refugees were in desperate need and that most were malnourished women and children. It said another 50.000 were to come.
Indonesian Red Cross told World Vision they estimated there were 165.839 refugees in camps at the time, and asked World Vision for the following assistance: medicine, food supplements (especially milk and beans), clothing for women and children, gardening tools and seeds, writing books and pencils.

World Vision visited Metinaro (near Dili) and reported that the people were "in very poor condition", with almost all children under 10 showing signs of malnourishment. One team member gave this description: "They were extremely thin; we could see the bones in their legs and arms; some were so weak they could not walk". Many people had eye diseases and many were camped beneath palm leaf shelters. (5)

The Church and World Vision sources give a more conservative estimate of the number of refugees than the Indonesian sources. It is also noteworthy that World Vision mentions the predominance of women and children - where are the men? Otherwise the sources are in general agreement:

*** that approximately 100.000 people would have come down**

from the mountains by the end of 1978;

* that most of these people were in a very bad state, their basic needs being food, medicine, clothing and shelter;
* that a massive and urgent relief operation was required to avert further tragedy.

Who are these people? Why have they left the mountains? Why are they in such shocking condition? What did they expect to find when they came down?

Three groups can be identified.

Not all Timorese lived along the coast or in the towns (which served as Portuguese administrative centres) prior to the Indonesian invasion in 1975. Presumably, therefore, many of these people are the traditional inhabitants of the mountain areas who have had their villages and life-support systems upset or destroyed by the war and have sought help from the Indonesian Government. A Church source says reports of severe housing shortages had been received from every parish and mission station. Another report quotes an Indonesian official as saying "that hundreds of villages had been 'wiped off the face of the earth' in the bombing... many names on the map of East Timor no longer existed". (6)

A second group possibly consists of those who have not come down 'voluntarily' but have been ordered by the Indonesian army to move from their mountain village or district into one of the 13 or so large Indonesian controlled strategic centres. It would appear that the situation of these people in terms of food supplies at least whilst in the mountains was sometimes better than it has been in the centres referred to. (7)

The third group, and the one most often referred to, consists of the well over 100.000 people who went to the mountains after the Indonesian invasion in December 1975 to evade or resist the Indonesian forces.

Living conditions in the mountains, formidable at the best of times, steadily deteriorated as a result of Indonesian bombing and military actions which intensified during late 1977 and 1978. These people had few medical supplies and no doctors to treat casualties and other illnesses. Constant military harassment forced them to keep moving making the cultivation of crops difficult and crops that were grown in mountain valleys were systematically destroyed by the Indonesian forces as part of their 1977-8 major offensives. (8)

An overall death toll of over 100.000 so far is mentioned. (9) But we have no idea of the death toll in the mountains or how many people are still there.

If people coming down expected to be able to take up agriculture on the lowlands they have been disappointed. For as a Church source reports: agriculture has been severely disrupted and until it is rehabilitated the people will depend on outside aid. Cultivation of food crops would be further impeded by the shortage of buffaloes, tools, money to pay labour and the disrepair of irrigation channels.

2. THE SITUATION IN THE FIRST HALF OF 1979

In its broad outlines, the situation in the first months of this year remains unchanged from what it was in 1978, and is far from normal.

People continue to come from the mountains in very bad shape.

Church sources reported in February 1979 that "practically all those who were hiding in the bush and hills have come down", making a total of 90.000. An April 1979 report, however, states that some continue to arrive each day, "in extremely dire conditions, practically naked and starving to death". (10) In an interview in the Indonesian daily Kompas on May 25, 1979, the Governor of East Timor, Guilhermo Goncalves stated that alongside illiteracy the main problem is the inundation of East Timor by people from the mountains and bush. The ABC Report from Asia reported on July 1, 1979 that 200.000 had come from the mountains and were suffering from malaria, asthmatic disorders and malnutrition.

The number of these people and their needs have placed a huge burden on existing services.

Nearly all Church aid, for example, is being devoted to their emergency relief by providing food, clothing, medicine, shelter and tools. In fact "the burden to provide supplies is becoming heavier all the time (and) from every side demands are coming... for more and more help". (11)

This has been compounded by two factors: the "complete failure" of the corn crop in many areas due to lack of rain, and increased involvement with refugees due to increased access by road to most parts of the island.

Malnutrition is widespread.

A foreign government official who visited East Timor in April 1979 is reported to have said that he had never seen malnutrition to compare with that in East Timor. (12)

Even in Dili, especially in the area known as Manoleuana, people go hungry and are dying every day. (13)

One observer spoke of seeing an older boy feeding his baby brother in a street in Dili by chewing cassava then giving it to the baby - because there was no rice and milk. (14)
There are many other references to malnutrition throughout this report.

An increasing death toll "seems to be a general phenomenon over all the villages in East Timor". (15)

As one letter from East Timor put it: "People are not dying now by bullets but by starvation and illness". (21 April 79)

Everywhere people are burying their dead. "During the first week of March, between March 1st and March 8th, twenty six people have been buried in this parish. The catechist opened his prayer book where he had recorded 101 burials in February, 74 burials in January 1979. The next morning there was another burial. The corpse was covered with bamboo as the people are too poor to make a wooden coffin. Since 1976 half the population of this town has gone." (16)

120 deaths were recorded in Turiscai January-March 1979.

There are reports that 300 die each month at the Ermera refugee camp. The death toll among the refugees has been so high that local people have coined the phrase - 'the more refugees, the more corpses'.

If these figures are representative of other parts of East Timor, then the death toll is of positively horrifying proportions.

The mounting death toll is surely reflected to some degree in the following statistics:

a 1974 census taken by the Diocese of Dili put the total population of East Timor at 688.771.

a 1978 (Oct) census supplied by the Assistant of Defence and Security in East Timor put the total population of East Timor at 329.271.

In the words of a Church source - where are the other 359.500? (17) Surely they are not all still in the mountains beyond the reach of the Indonesian administration.

Large numbers of the population continue to live in strategic centres.

These people, who comprise well over half the population of East Timor, are officially classified as displaced people by the Indonesian Government. They should not be confused with those who have come down from the mountains, who have generally been displaced in other ways, though the latter group have probably added their numbers to the former in some cases.

According to the Assistant of Defence and Security in East Timor, on December 6 1978, the total population of displaced persons was 318.921, spread over urban and rural areas as follows:

Dili	*17.861*	*Viqueque*	*69.799*	
Liquica	*17.033*	*Manatuto*	*10.888*	
Ermera	*15.548*	*Baucau*	*10.434*	
Maliana	*37.449*	*Quelicai*	*12.263*	
Suai	*21.230*	*Laga*	*10.082*	
Same	*14.337*	*Baguia*	*4.596*	
Alas	*2.649*	*Lospalos*	*18.474*	*(18)*
Lacluta	*6.001*			

Most of these people have been living in these centres for some 2-3 years. They have been variously referred to as 'relief centres', 'concentration camps', 'prisons', and 'strategic hamlets'.

The Indonesian army ordered people to move from their own village or district into one or other of these 15 centres as part of its strategy against FRETILIN.

The strategy, which resembles counter-insurgency techniques employed against guerillas in places such as Rhodesia, Malaysia, and Vietnam, has increased the Indonesian Army's control of the local population and allowed it, in the words of an Indonesian Parliamentarian, "to separate the people from the terrorists" (i.e. FRETILIN). (20) In this way FRETILIN access to the local population and whatever support the people were prepared to give FRETILIN have been curtailed and the task of communicating anti-FRETILIN pro-integration propaganda (referred to as 'instruksi' by the Indonesian administration) has been made easier. (21)

Life in these over-crowded centres is not easy. There is a shortage of housing. There is little work and people may not leave without a travel permit (surat jalan). People are expected to carry ammunition and supplies for the Indonesian army to the mountains for no pay. (This is known as TBO - Tenaga Bantuan Operasi: Auxiliary Operations).

Only land on the outskirts in the near vicinity may be cultivated. There is, therefore, a shortage of food and a built-in dependence on outside supplies.

The war continues, though on a reduced scale, and large numbers of Indonesian troops continue to operate in East Timor.

War continues in East Timor, though at a much reduced level compared to the period December 1975 - late 1978. There are sporadic reports of military encounters in East Timor, the most recent being a reported ambush of an Indonesian truck convoy near Railaco on the Dili-Ermera road, in May 1979. (22)
Letters from East Timor tell of the possibility of ambush along various roads - in particular the roads from Aipelo to Bazartete and Manatuto to Bacau which are believed to be impassable at certain points. (23)

Jim Dunn feels that fighting is now "confined to mountainous areas in the south-west sector of the area and perhaps one or two sectors in the centre and in the east". (24)

In its July 1979 Newsletter, the Melbourne - based Asian Bureau Australia reported: "Even after Easter some military have been reported killed in fighting. On March 26, 1979, the Military Command of East Timor was officially ended by the Indonesian Minister of Defence and Security. In the beginning of April, some warships left Dili with a few batallions that had completed their duties in East Timor. But immediately after their departure, some new batallions arrived to take their place".(25)

In April 1979 there were batallions in the following places:

Dili (2)	*Maubisse*
Liquica	*Ainaro*
Bobonaro	*Same*
Ermera	*Lospalos*
Aileu	*Viqueque*
Baucau	*Baguia*
Manatuto	*Ossu* (26)
Laclubar	

The Indonesian Army, not the civilian Regional Government, is the effective administrator of East Timor.

For each key civilian position there is a corresponding, but more powerful, military position.

Thus:	*Governor*	-	*Korem (Regional Military Command), including Intelligence.*
	Bupati (13) (regents)	-	*Kodim (District Military Command), including Intelligence.*
	Camat (64) (subdistrict head)	-	*Koramil (Area Military Command).*

A letter said of one Timorese camat that he had as much power as an unloaded gun. (27)

Any return to normality will be slow and the features of the current situation outlined above will continue so long as the Indonesian army maintains its war against the resistance (though reduced in scale) and its occupation and administration of East Timor.

Section Two: The Response

The response to the humanitarian needs of the East Timorese has, in all respects, been controlled by the Indonesian Government, as the following accounts testify. Only those Governments and organisations prepared to work through the Indonesian Government and on its terms have been allowed to help.

International Red Cross (ICRC), for example, has not been permitted to work in East Timor by the Indonesian Government.

ICRC first visited East Timor in late August 1975 - towards the end of the UDT-FRETILIN civil war. During the period September-early December 1975, the period of de facto control by FRETILIN, ICRC was granted access to all parts of the country. ICRC teams conducted health surveys and medical operations, distributed food, visited prisoners, and traced missing people. (28)

The ICRC team was evacuated on December 3, 1975 (4 days before the major Indonesian invasion of Dili) following Jakarta's refusal to respect the neutral status of Dili hospital. (29)

Urgent appeals from ICRC to Jakarta for guarantees of safety of Red Cross workers were made but not granted. A standby team remained in Darwin for a month after the invasion in the hope of returning to East Timor. (30)

ICRC has continued to negotiate with the Indonesian Government for its readmittance to East Timor, but refused to go in until its conditions were met. (31) It has kept an official in Jakarta doing little more than attempting to negotiate a re-entry. (32) There have been one or two brief visits by ICRC officials, but permission to work there continues to be withheld. (33) It has refused to supply aid to either the Indonesian Government or the Indonesian Red Cross for use in East Timor. (34) Petitions from many different quarters for the ICRC to be allowed into East Timor have also fallen on deaf ears. (Within Australia, e.g., editorials in the Australian on 12/9/78 and News Weekly on 11/10/78, and the Petition organised by Liberal Backbencher Michael Hodgman and signed by 80 MPs from all parties in October 1978).

The official reasons given by the Indonesian Government for not having ICRC in East Timor are that ICRC is not needed because Indonesia has its national Red Cross which is coping, and that ICRC allegedly involved itself improperly in a political resolution on East Timor at the UN. (35)

The real reason for excluding ICRC would seem to be that the Indonesian Government could not accept ICRC witnessing its activities in East Timor nor tolerate its admission to all parts of East Timor, FRETILIN areas included.

It should be noted, however, that ICRC now has access to political prisoners within Indonesia and that, according to the Indonesian Foreign Minister, Dr Mochtar, Indonesia has "no objections at all to the ICRC visiting East Timor" (our emphasis). (36)

Contributions from other quarters, however, have been accepted - on Indonesian terms.

i. Aid to East Timor from the Australian Government and Australian Red Cross, via the Indonesian Government

To date, the Australian Government has given $581.270 in emergency aid.

October 6, 1976: $81.270 was given to Indonesian Red Cross

for 'rehabilitation programmes' in East Timor. (37)

November, 1976: *$250.000 was given to IRC. It was originally intended for the purchase of ambulances for the hospitals in Dili and Baucau, but was reportedly used for food and medicines.(38,*

14 Sept, 1978: *$250.000 was given to IRC. (39) Of this grant some $200.000 was for the purchase of maize, clothing, cooking utensils, tents, pharmaceuticals, and vehicles.*

The balance of about $50.000 was spent on two barge loads of items not readily available in Indonesia, such as biscuits and vitamin enriched milk powder.

The first consignment arrived in Dili by barge from Darwin on Nov. 11, 1978 and was handed to IRC by the Councillor for Development Assistance from the Australian Embassy in Jakarta.

The second consignment arrived in Dili by barge from Darwin about Jan. 27, 1979. It was officially handed over to IRC by Mr Geoffrey Allen from the Australian Embassy in Jakarta.

In addition the Indonesian Government agreed to the release in East Timor of 1000 tonnes of corn from the Java grain stock to be replenished by the value equivalent of wheat, rice or corn from within Australia's food allocation to Indonesia 1978-79. (40)

It is understood another grant from the Australian Government can be expected soon.

According to Australian Red Cross officials there is an understanding between IRC and ARC that any request for help in East Timor will be favourably received. There have been no requests in recent times. Earlier ARC gave about $7000 of milk powder to the IRC programme. (41)

ii. Aid to East Timor from the New Zealand Government and New Zealand Red Cross, via the Indonesian Government.

Towards the end of 1978, the New Zealand Government gave $50.000 in kind through the New Zealand Red Cross.

Mr Jerry Talbot of NZRC accompanied an airlift of food and medicine to Dili in January 1979.

$8000 of medical supplies donated by NZRC were flown to East Timor in May 1979 by the New Zealand airforce.

iii. Other Governmental aid

Presumably some, if not all, of the other 9 Governments whose Ambassadors visited East Timor in September 1978 and were shocked at what they saw, have also contributed on a government to government basis.

iv. Aid from World Vision to East Timor.

World Vision Indonesia provided seeds and agricultural equipment in 1976, and sent an Indonesian team to make an assessment in 1978.

World Vision Australia sent 10 tonnes of high protein biscuit and 20 tonnes of Vitamin A enriched milk by barge from Darwin to Dili in Jan. 1979 for distribution by Indonesian Red Cross. (It shared this barge with the Australian Government)

It should be noted that even though the Indonesian Government carried out a complete security check on World Vision, it still did not permit any World Vision staff to accompany the goods or, as would normally happen with World Vision relief, be present to at least observe distribution.

The Indonesian Government put many obstacles in the path of World Vision which resulted in the shipment being delayed for one month, a shipment World Vision believed was urgently needed in East Timor. A special security group within the Indonesian Foreign Affairs ministry gave permission only after the conditions mentioned above were met.

Despite frequent requests by World Vision no report on the actual distribution of the goods has been forthcoming from Indonesian Red Cross in East Timor. (42)

The following points can be made by way of summary concerning the Indonesian Government's policy on aid to Timor:

* all aid has gone to areas under Indonesian control only.
* Indonesia is very reluctant to admit foreigners. When they have been their visit has been brief and restricted.
* all the aid has been sought and given for emergency relief, not for production and reconstruction.
* no thorough independent assessment of the needs, no supervision of distribution, no implementation of an autonomous programme, and no evaluation of the Indonesian Government's aid programme, have taken place.
* all the grants have made to the Indonesian Red Cross for its programme.

INDONESIAN RED CROSS AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF AID IN E. TIMOR

The Indonesian Government regards its own national Red Cross (Palang Merah Indonesia) as the sole implementer of aid in East Timor.

The Church in East Timor has been able to operate its own programme but its officials are "very often reminded that social assistance must be channelled through PMI (IRC) or through Kodim (the military command". (43)

The organisation and services of IRC

The IRC was founded in 1945 and admitted to ICRC in 1950.

Its HQ are in Jakarta at Jalan Abdul Muis 66, P.O. Box 2009.

In 1977 it had 290 branches spread through all provinces, regencies and districts. Its national chairman then was Prof. Satrio.

It is financed from the Central and local Governments, its own fundraising and donations.

Heavy emphasis is placed on having the necessary skills, resources, and trained personnel to handle a range of natural disasters.

More freedom and responsibility has been given to the Regional organisation in recent years, though ultimate authority still rests with HQ in Jakarta. Stockpiling of relief goods has been decentralised: relief goods at HQ are kept to a minimum whilst enough is stockpiled at regional HQ to enable first emergency assistance in the event of a medium sized disaster.

It is IRC policy to cooperate closely with the local government and the Armyduring an emergency. (Timorese in fact consider

that in their experience in Timor, the Army controls the IRC . Further they point out that the doctors working with IRC in Timor are all military doctors). (44)

It is also IRC policy to promote the implementation and dissemination of the Geneva conventions for the army and the police through close cooperation with the Ministry of Defence. (45)

Senior officials of Australian Red Cross know and respect their counterparts in IRC and have admired their work in such disaster situations as the Lombok famine. To quote the Secretary General of Australian Red Cross, Mr Leon Stubbings:

> *"They (IRC) certainly have the capacity to mount an effective disaster relief operation, but whether they have been permitted to in East Timor I do not know". (46)*

The IRC operation in East Timor

According to an official Indonesian Government brochure on the activities of the IRC in East Timor, IRC's first involvement in the East Timor situation was with the 40.000 refugees who fled into Indonesian Timor during the civil war in September 1975. (Timorese refugees who, after much trouble, eventually escaped from the camps around Atambua in 1976 and got to Portugal and from there to Australia, have been very critical of IRC's role during their time in Indonesian Timor. One refugee has alleged, for example, that the actual number of 20.000 was deliberately doubled by Indonesian officials). (47)

The official brochure says that an IRC Special Team arrived in Dili on Dec 29, 1975 and proceeded to establish its HQ in Dili and branches in 12 regencies whose principal tasks were to give first aid, supply relief (food, clothing, medicine) and recruit and train local volunteers. (48)

This provisional organisation was formally replaced by the Indonesian Red Cross Society for East Timor on April 1, 1977.

Mrs Sebastiana Lopes da Cruz (wife of the Vice Governor) became the head, guided by three IRC officials seconded from HQ in Jakarta: Mr Sambas Amintadipura, Mr Hamid Sjarif, and Mr Iyang Djuharja.
(Reports from Timor say Sebastiana Lopes da Cruz' position is only nominal, that she is presented to visitors as the official head but has no power in practice). (49)

According to the official brochure, IRC took over the hospitals in Dili and Baucau and established Community Health Centres in the regencies, each of them staffed by a doctor, nurse and assistants.
(Letters from Timor say that now there are no IRC offices outside Dili, but visits are made to various centres. They are also critical of the hospital in Dili alleging that it is very dirty and without running water). (50)

The official brochure asserts that much has been done by the fully fledged Red Cross of East Timor to supply basic relief to the wounded, refugees etc. in the form of clothing, food, first aid, medicines and writing materials.
(Nevertheless letters from Timor have categorically asserted that many able-bodied men who are also able to read and write who have come down from the mountains have been killed by the Indonesian army... they further assert this happened even during the period of the Presidential amnesty, ie. up to December 31, 1977. Allegations of shortages of medical supplies are mentioned later in this report).

The official brochure states that IRC has an important role in TKPMP (Team Koordinasi Penanggulangan Masalah Pengungsi = Team for Coordinating Efforts in Coping with the Refugee Problem) which was formed on December 24, 1977.

Problems of distribution

As mentioned earlier, it is Indonesian Government policy to channel all relief aid through the Indonesian Red Cross.

According to the Vice-Governor of East Timor, Fransisco Lopes da Cruz, the Indonesian Government has granted some 3 billion Rupiah (approx $A4.000.000) to IRC for its programme in Timor. (52) Much of this would have originated as foreign aid to the Indonesian Government, of course.

This has been supplemented by donations from fund-raising efforts and public appeals within Indonesia.

For example, the wife of the South Korean Ambassador to Indonesia recently donating a small sum raised through a function at her home.
Indonesian MP's who visited East Timor in February 1979 pledging themselves "to try to collect funds, food, clothing and books for their fellow Indonesians in East Timor". (53)
The Governor of North Sulawesi, Willy Lasut, appealing to the public for clothes, food, and medicine for people coming down from the mountains in East Timor. (54)

But the aid is not getting through to the people who need it in sufficient quantities. For despite the availibility of this sort of aid, people in East Timor continue to suffer and die because their basic nutritional and medical needs are not being met.

Many reports claim that the problem is one of distribution, in one way or another.

"As a matter of fact, the Government's aid is not lacking in quantity, but in the management of its distribution". (55)

Not enough emergency aid has been available when required.

For example, an IRC truck arrived at Remexio while the Foreign Ambassadors were there in September 1978. As people rushed to receive the first clothes and nutritious food they had seen for months, home guardsmen using sticks and stones tried to form them into queues. Even so there were only enough supplies for half of them. (56)

This sort of thing continues to happen.

For example, in March 1979, 5 tons of corn were delivered to Maubisse where more than 6000 people had been waiting for it for five weeks.

The report which tells of this incident, commented: "If there is any food at all (for very hungry and sick new arrivals), it is usually very little and comes very late. Which makes the whole aid programme actually meaningless." (57)

Lack of transport has been blamed for these distribution breakdowns.

"Indonesia had sufficient food and medical supplies... distribution was the main problem" (Senator Carrick, Minister Representing Foreign Minister, Australian Senate, 13.9.78) (58)

"Lack of transportation is the big bottleneck" (April 25, 79) (59)

Transport has always been a problem in East Timor. Roads are poor and unreliable. Light planes and boats have only limited access. Nevertheless it has to be pointed out that the Indonesian army has conducted a big operation in East Timor for over 3 years, is still there, and surely has the resources to transport aid, Brigadier-General

Dading Kalbuadi's recent statement to the media not withstanding - that helicopters would no longer be available for this sort of work as they were being transferred from East Timor. (60)

With a few exceptions, the roads are secure from FRETILIN attacks and there is photographic evidence of a sizeable fleet of new trucks lining up at Dili harbour to be loaded with goods from the Australian barge, Alanna Fay when it visited Dili in January 1979.

"Cars and trucks" claims one report, "are beginning to move to almost all parts of the inland, although the roads to the hills are not always in good condition due to the rainy season". (Feb. 1979)

But there are other 'distribution problems'.
There are widespread and repeated charges of administrative corruption; that is, aid intended for the relief of suffering Timorese is being misappropriated and used for other purposes by the Indonesian administration (the Army, the IRC and the Regional Government).

"There is help from everywhere but what happens to it is a mystery. Indonesia is a nation of all kinds of robbers and parasites". 21 April, 1979 (62)

"There is massive corruption associated with aid". (Senior Indonesian public servant, Dec. 78)

At Maubisse in February 1979 an average of 150 people a day came for treatment to the poorly stocked Government Health centre whilst "at the same time there were medicines for sale in the Chinese shop (at prices) people could not afford to pay". (63)

The same applies in Dili.

Goods from the Australian Government chartered barge, Alanna Fay which arrived in Dili in January 1979, and medicines flown in from New Zealand were on sale at the Toko Vong vi Vung in Kampung Bairro Central in Dili and another shop the Casa Vitoria.
Some was also exchanged for meat in Oecussi which was then sold for a good price in Dili where meat is in short supply.

The Polyclinic in Dili is notoriously short of medicines, while shops like Toko Vong vi Vung, which sells both medicine and ordinary goods, are well stocked with medicines selling at prices few can afford.

Aid supplies stored in the godown (warehouse) in Dili are being sold by the Indonesian army and IRC direct to the people or to Chinese and Timorese merchants. (64)

Indonesian Red Cross is said to take special pains over its image when visitors come.

For example, an impression both of need and hard work is easily created by making sure plenty of empty aid boxes are in evidence around IRC HQ in Dili when visitors come.(65)

Another account tells that on the day before US Congress-woman Meynor and her party visited Dili in 1977, Indonesian troops and officials moved large amounts of Red Cross clothing, bedding and furniture into a women's refugee establishment to be visited by Mrs Meynor. However it was reported that the Indonesians seized back all of this material as soon as the visit was over. (66)

Food sent in as aid, and desperately needed, is sold for profit.

100 kilo bags of rice sent in as aid to Timor are sold in Dili for Rp 12.500 - 18.000, and in outlying areas such as Baucau for Rp 30.000, and in Laga for Rp 25.000.

There are cases of business companies exploiting aid by using it as a trading currency.

> *For example, P.T. Denok, a company controlled by the Bupati of Ermera, Tomas Goncalves, and some senior Indonesian army officers, exchanges aid in the form of corn and rice for coffee. These people therefore monopolise both the aid and the coffee market and profit handsomely because Timor coffee brings good prices on the outside market and it does not cost them anything to purchase it from the producers.*
> *People from Ermera who attempt to break the monopoly by selling coffee in Dili are arrested by the military police there.*
>
> *In April 1979, food aid to Ermera was cut off. The reason given was that people there had to learn to work hard and not be dependent on handouts. But there is very little work and people may not leave Ermera without a travel permit.*
>
> *Jobs such as road maintenance realise between Rp250 - 500 a day whilst some skilled jobs such as housebuilding bring between Rp 750 - 1000 a day.*

The general picture that clearly emerges from these accounts is perhaps best summarised in the words of one report which said:

> *"All over the area one hears talk about aid manipulations by the regional government"*

This report then reinforces this by proposing:

> *that the Central Government (Jakarta) which "is unable to control the regional and local officials ... should not only check with its representatives in the regions, but should also go directly to the people to see whether the officials are really doing what they report";*

So strong is this person's feeling that he goes even further and says the Central Government should *"channel aid via the the Church not the regional government"*.

CHURCH AID PROGRAMMES

Catholic Church aid to East Timor belongs in a special category because it represents a departure from the Indonesian Government policy already referred to and repeated recently by the Indonesian Foreign Minister, Dr Mochtar: "Any aid should be channelled through the Central or Regional government, while humanitarian relief could be relayed to IRC as the responsible agency in this field". (68)

Why has an exception been made and the Church allowed to run its own programme, despite the above policy and alleged reluctance on the part of some Islamic elements in the Indonesian Government?

It is probably because the Indonesian Government recognises the influential position the Church holds in Timorese society. Presumably it is also hoped that increased contact between the Church in East Timor and the Indonesian Church will eventually make its contribution to the integration process.

This is consistent with reports of Indonesian Government policies to recruit Catholic troops and Catholic teachers to serve in East Timor.

The Aid programme of the East Timor Catholic Church

In September 1977, the Diocesan Social Delegate in East Timor, with the assistance of LPPS and CRS Indonesia (69) prepared an East Timor Emergency and Rehabilitation Programme.

This programme was presented for funding to Catholic Church aid organisations in Europe, North America and Australia.

In the last 18 months over Rp 100.000.000 ($A140.000) has been channelled through the Indonesian Bishop's Conference to the programme in Dili. Aid is distributed through the parishes and missions and has been spent on the following:

food	widows and orphans
clothing	agricultural projects
medicine	animal husbandry
shelter and housing	schools
small business loans	

To date, no foreign personnel involved in contributing to this programme have been allowed visit East Timor.

Most of the aid has been devoted to emergency relief, and the need for this type of assistance continues:

"Outside aid in considerable quantities for food and shelter is still badly needed". (70)

However a small start has been made on rehabilitation. E.g.,

- finance to restore a coffee plantation in Ainaro;
- finance for rice growing projects near Dili, Same, Baucau, Laga and Fatumaca;
- some house-building.

The Church in East Timor feels it needs more and better qualified personnel if it is to extend this rehabilitation programme.

The US Catholic Relief Service (CRS) programme (yet to be implemented)

Until recently CRS had been contributing to the East Timor Church programme. It has now obtained permission to operate its own short-term programme.

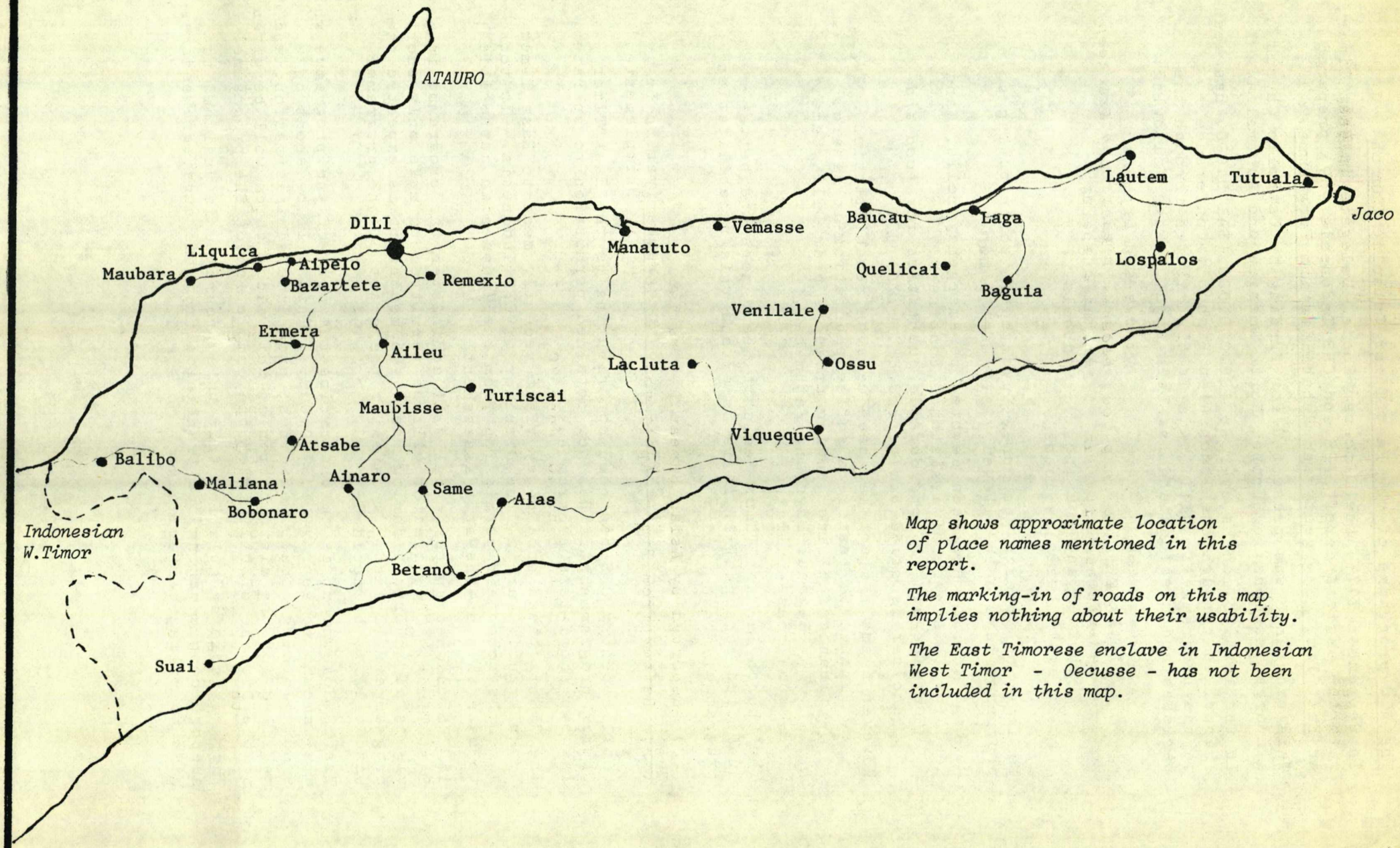
The CRS is based on a 6-day visit recently made to East Timor by Mr Francis Carlin, the Director of CRS Indonesia. It took 4 months to obtain permission from the Indonesian authorities to make this on-the-spot assessment.

16 CRS Indonesian personnel will administer the programme in East Timor. The Director will be permitted to make only short visits at intervals during the 4 - 6 months it is expected the programme will last. A date for the start of the programme has still to be decided.

The US Government is to underwrite the cost of the programme which will amount to approx. $US900.000. This will be spent on food, clothing, soap, medicines, programme administration, and vehicles for the distribution of this aid - which will be given to the Diocese of Dili after the completion of the programme.

There is some speculation that this programme is designed to support people making the transition from the strategic centres back to village life.

EAST TIMOR



Map shows approximate location of place names mentioned in this report.

The marking-in of roads on this map implies nothing about their usability.

The East Timorese enclave in Indonesian West Timor - Oecusse - has not been included in this map.

References

(1) These Ambassadors represented Canada, USA, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, India, South Korea, Bangladesh, Eygpt, Syria, and Irak. (Age 5.9.78)

(2) Richard Gill, Melbourne Herald 9.9.78; 11.9.78; 12.9.78.

(3) ABC Radio News and Report from Asia 10.9.78.

Australia's Ambassador, Mr Tom Critchley, was reported as saying to the Vice Governor of East Timor: *"It really is a big problem. Please let me know what Australia can do to help solve it. After I receive your report I shall ask social and volunteer organisations in Australia to help you, because I know they are keen in this humanitarian field". Age 9.9.78.*

(4) ABC news 9.9.78

(5) World Vision Report on East Timor Relief p. 3 (undated).

(6) Notes on the Current Situation in East Timor, Jim Dunn (Legislative Research Service, Canberra) 8.3.79, p.9.

(7) Letter from Timor 20.6.79; cf. also TIS Oct. 77

(8) Asian Bureau Australia Newsletter, no 46 June 79. and J. Dunn op. cit. pp. 3, 7.

(9) J. Dunn op. cit. p. 9.

Liberal Backbencher Michael Hodgman told Federal Parliament 12.9.78 that up to 40,000 Timorese might have died from starvation because their crops had been destroyed by defoliants spread by the Indonesians. Age 14.9.78

(10) Church report 2.

(11) Church report 1.

(12) Reported by Asian Bureau Australia.

(13) Letter from Timor, April 79.

(14) Ibid.

(15) Church report 1.

(16) ABA newsletter no 46, June 79, p.1.

(17) Ibid.

(18) Though the figure of 318.921 exceeds the sum total of the town populations given, both have been accepted for purposes of this report as we are not in a position to query them any further.

(20) Quoted Indonesian Embassy Newsletter,Canberra 8/79

(21) These centres are for: 'keamanan' - security
'pemeriksaan' - investigation
'instruksi' - instruction.

Instruksi involves instruction in Bahasa Indonesia and the Pancasila, efforts to convince Timorese they are the same as Indonesians because of similar skin colour; that they are brothers; that Fretilin are Communist etc.

(22) East Timor News, no 55, 56.

(23) Letters received from Timor during 1979.

(24) Jim Dunn op.cit. p.4

(25) ABA op. cit p. 1.

(26) Letter from Timor, April 79.

(27) Ibid.

(28) ICRC cable, quoted TIS 22, Dec. 77.

(29) The Age 4.12.75

(30) The Age 9.1.76

(31) The Age 7.9.77

(32) Conversation 27.6.79.

(33) There have been unconfirmed reports of a visit to Dili by ICRC personnel about May-June this year.

(34) see TIS no 22.

(35) Indonesian Embassy Newsletter, Canberra 6/79 (Mochtar).

(36) Ibid.

(37) TIS Dec 77, p. 2.

(38) Hansard, Senate Estimates, p. 664, 16 Sept 77.

(39) Hansard, p. 1003 14 Sept 78.

(40) Australian Foreign Affairs Record, Nov 78, p. 547.

(41) Mr Leon Stubbings, Sec. Gen. ARC 27.6.79.

(42) World Vision Report on East Timor Relief.

(43) Church report 1, Feb. 79.

(44) Letter from Timor April 79.

(45) Indonesian Red Cross Society Report to 23rd International Conference of the Red Cross, Romania 1977, p. 7.

(46) Conversation 27.6.79

(47) cf. Hansard 23 March 77, p. 459-469.

(48) Activities of the Indonesian Red Cross in East Timor (undated) published by Indonesian Government Dept. of Infomration. (Available Ind. Embassy, Canberra).

(49) Letter from Timor, June 79.

(50) Letter from Timor, April 79.

52) Letter from Timor, May 79.

(53) Indonesian Embassy Newsletter, 8/79.

(54) Kompas 16.3.79.

(55) Church report 2.

(56) Richard Gill, Melbourne Herald 11.9.78

(57) ABA op. cit pp. 1-2.

(58) The Age 13.9.78

(59) ABA op. cit.

(60) Report from Asia, ABC, 1 July 79.

(62) Letter from Timor.

(63) ABA opcit.

(64) Series of letters from Timor.

(65) Ibid.

(66) Jim Dunn, op. cit p. 7.

(68) Indonesian Embassy Newsletter 6/79 p. 5

(69) Indonesian Bishops Conference and (US) Catholic Relief Services.

(70) Church report 2.